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MARY WASHINGTON COLLEGE

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Ann Bullock

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MUSICALE

Mr. Johnson sat in the living room of his ground floor apartment, patiently awaiting Paul's arrival. Finally he heard his nephew's brisk steps and the sound of the opening door. He turned and greeted his younger relative. The clean bracing scent of Paul's after-shave lotion entered the room, and the familiar deep voice of his nephew answered his greeting.

"Ready to be thrown to the lions, Uncle Thomas?"

"I don't think it will be quite that bad, Paul," Mr. Johnson said calmly.

As he spoke he could hear a sharp click as Paul opened the closet door, followed by the soft sibilant rustle of cloth. The hanger clattered as it was released from its burden. Mr. Johnson frowned at this instance of Paul's solicitousness, but his features quickly returned to their normal placidity, and he accepted the coat from Paul's hand. He caressed its soft texture as he put it on, and turning toward Paul, he asked, "Shall we go?"

"I'm ready if you are."

Mr. Johnson walked through the door, pausing until he heard the click of the lock. Paul joined him.

"The car is to the left, Uncle Thomas."

As they walked down the street, Mr. Johnson felt the warmth of the sunshine and asked, "It's a beautiful day, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is, Uncle Thomas. Here's the car." Paul opened the door, and his uncle got into the car.

When they reached the Tuttles' house, Paul accompanied his uncle as far as the front door, where they were met by Mrs. Tuttle.

"Why, Thomas Johnson!" she gushed. "I'm so glad you could come. You come with me right this minute. Everyone has been wondering where you were."

"Hello, Amelia," Mr. Johnson said. "I hope I'm not too late."

"I'll pick you up in a couple of hours, Uncle Thomas," Paul said. Then he left, and Mrs. Tuttle's high harsh voice and heavy, spicy perfume enveloped Mr. Johnson.

Taking his hand, Mrs. Tuttle led Mr. Johnson through the house. Her fleshy, sweating palm tugged impatiently at Mr. Johnson's hand as though it had a mind apart from her grating voice.

As they reached the garden, Mr. Johnson could hear Mr. Tuttle's booming tones over the deep murmur of the other men's conversations and the high buzz of the women's chatter.

"Tom, old boy, how've you been?" Mr. Tuttle's voice beat on his ears with the force of a physical blow. "Come meet the rest of the folks, and then let's get this party started."

"How are you, Arthur?" As usual, Mr. Johnson thought his own voice sounded weak and faint in comparison to Arthur Tuttle's.

"Art, dear, please introduce Thomas to the Henry Whites. I'm sure he would enjoy talking to them," Amelia commanded. Turning to Mr. Johnson, she continued effusively, "You'll just *love* Henry White, Thomas. He writes folk music, so I just know you two will have a lot in common."

Mr. Johnson recoiled slightly from the smell of her alcohol and garlic-laden breath. Hoping to escape from the treat in store for him, he said to his hostess, "I'm sure Mr. White would rather talk to someone he knows, Amelia."

"Don't be silly, old boy," Arthur Tuttle boomed. "Hank's dying to meet you." Taking Mr. Johnson's elbow in a vise-like grip and holding his arm at an awkward angle, he bellowed, "Hey, Hank, Liza Sue! Com'mere. I got somebody I want you to meet!"

Mr. Johnson firmly removed Arthur's hand from his arm. He stood quietly beside his hosts, waiting more for his anger at Arthur's tactless gesture to cool than for the Whites' arrival.

"You must be that dah'lin' Mistah Johnson we've been heahing so much about," drawled a carnation-scented woman who had joined them.

"How are you, Mister Johnson?" Mr. Johnson became aware of the presence of Henry White.

Mr. Johnson's answering greeting was interrupted by Amelia's shrill voice:

"We'll leave you musicians to talk about your favorite subject, if you don't mind. Art and I must be getting back to our duties as hosts!"

Still feeling slightly annoyed with Arthur and uncomfortable with these strangers, Mr. Johnson said in a forced tone, "I would imagine from your accent, Mrs. White, that you are a Southerner."

"Why, Mistah Johnson, do you really think Ah have a Southe'n accent? Actually, Ah'm a damyankee by bi'th, but since Ah married a Southe'neh, Ah'm a rebel by choice. But Ah don't see how you can say Ah have a Southe'n accent. Why, all my friends tell me what a horrible Yankee *twang* Ah have!"

"But you do live in the South. Is that right, Mr. White?"

"Call me Hank. Ever'boday does! Yessir, we live in Georgia. I claim Nashville, Tennessee as my birthplace. Fine little town Nashville is. But we live in Georgia now. Art tells me you're a piano player, Mr. Johnson. Mind if I call you Tom?"

Mr. Johnson shuddered at the thought of being addressed as "Tom" by this sweat-smelling person.

"Yes . . . I am a pianist. I divide my time between teaching and giving occasional musicales, such as I'm doing today. I understand you are in music also, Mr. White."

"Call me Hank. Yes, I'm a folk-song writer. You probably have heard some of my songs. I wrote four songs this year that sold over a million 45's apiece—"Angels, Watch My Little Baby," "Send Me a Lock of Your Golden Hair," "Tomorrow Is My Hangin' Day"—They're all kinda sad—and then a real catchy little tune, "My Horse, Paint, Is My Only True Love." Have you heard them?"

"I don't believe so, Mr. White. I imagine our tastes in music are a little different."

"Well, they were hits in the Country and Western field. I don't go in for this so-called "authentic" folk music that everybody's listening to these days. Yessir, Country and Western—that's *real* folk music! What kind of music do you play, Tom?"

"I prefer classical music and also jazz. This may seem like a strange mixture to you, but I find that each makes me appreciate the beauties of the other."

"Why, Mistah Johnson, I think that's simply mahvellous! And you ah going to play for us today? I can't wait to heah you. I just *adore* classical music!"

"I hope you will enjoy it, Mrs. White."

"Thomas, are you ready to play for us?" Mrs. Tuttle had joined them. She grasped Mr. Johnson's hand and led him through the murmuring groups of people.

The parlor was cool and quiet. The paraffin-scent of floor wax, the piney odor of furniture polish, and the pungent, stinging suggestion of ammonia combined to form a clean house smell that was refreshing to Mr. Johnson after the close human smell in the garden. He sat at the piano, caressing its cold, smooth keys with the light touch of a tender lover. The delicate pressure of his fingertips drew forth a faint, muted melody from the piano.

The dissonant sound of many voices shattered the spell of the music. Mr. Johnson could hear the bustling sounds of people settling down in the chairs set out for them. Mrs. Tuttle was making her little speech.

Attention, everyone! As you all know, we have a talented performer in our midst today. Mr. Thomas Johnson, who teaches piano to many of your children, is also a concert pianist who is becoming quite well-known. He has consented to perform for us today. Mr. Johnson will play selections from Bach, which I'm sure everyone will enjoy. Mr. Thomas Johnson!"

A polite wave of applause spread throughout the room.

Thomas Johnson began to play. The piercingly sweet sounds filled his mind and heart, blotting out all consciousness of his surroundings. The music returned his caresses with an infinitely lighter, tenderer touch, enveloping him in its embrace. He surrendered to its spell completely, losing himself in its enthralling beauty. The ivory keys grew warm as his fingers fondled them.

Each song he played became part of the spell. Each evoked a separate, responsive chord in him, bringing his whole being into

communion with the music. The enchantment grew stronger, as his fingers became more insistent, more demanding.

The music responded to his touch, fulfilling his desires until he lost all sense of his own existence. He was united with the music; they existed only in each other.

The sound of applause rapped insistently on his ears, waiting for recognition. Slowly, Thomas Johnson became aware of his surroundings. Mrs. Tuttle was babbling something above the noise of the clapping. Regretfully, Mr. Johnson closed the piano lid and turned toward her.

"Thomas, that was marvelous! So spiritual and uplifting! I felt like an angel floating on a cloud!"

"Mistah Johnson, that was just wonderful! Ah declah, those were the prettiest songs Ah've heard in a long time." Carnations again.

"Thomas, would you like something to eat? It's just about time for the buffet. I imagine everyone is starved by now."

"No, thank you, Amelia. If you don't mind, I think I'll just sit here and wait for Paul."

"Oh, that's perfectly all right, if you're sure you're not hungry. I do have to attend to my other guests, so I'll have to leave you alone. I'll get your cheque in the mail Monday. Find your husband, Liza Sue, and let's go and see how everybody's getting along."

They left Mr. Johnson to wait for Paul. He sat quietly on the piano stool, thinking of his beloved.

Winnifred Doyle

Anne Everett



ATTACK

*Attack the hard shell.
Crack it with one stone.
Watch it crumble
'Til all the flesh is bare,
Then walk away in triumph,
Retaining your own hard shell.*

Martha E. Giles

A LITTLE CHILD

*Dirty hands
 curled up fingers
 bitten nails
 clutching cap
 kneeling there
 hole in shoe
 head bowed
 Church bells,
 organ swells,
Somewhere, a little child.*

Martha E. Giles

A PETAL DROPPED

*A petal dropped from
 deep black rose
A star flung on
 deep black night
The beauties of blackness
Surround me,
Confound me.*

*A fiery flash from
 deep black eyes
A questioning smile on
 dark black lips
The haters of blackness
Confine me,
Remind me . . .
 "You're white."*

Becky Fletcher

AND HE CRAWLED

*And he crawled
Whimpering
Sobbing
After the fall
When he let go
Of all the real
The heights he sought
The lights he saw
The wine he craved
And tossed aside.
He fell
And lost
And hurt
And moaned
And closed his eyes
To all he ever wanted
To soothe a dying mind.*

Patricia Pascoe

TIME PASSED

*Sensitively I looked at you
And sensitively you returned the look,
Sympathetically you took my hand
And emphatically I sighed and
(Parenthetically conversed)
With you, my true.*

*Conversed we audaciously
Slivered up our lives vivaciously
Quivered each to have the other understood
And vowed to spend the night together when we could.*

TIME PASSED . . .

*Sensibly we sighed
and grievedly
Left each other
much relievedly.*

Lori Vink



Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

When Edward Albee set out to write *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, he had only a catchy title copied from the wall of a Greenwich Village bar and a vague idea that he wanted his play to end with an exorcism. From such uncertain beginnings has emerged a play which stands head and shoulders above the great mass of contemporary American drama. From being merely a "very interesting" young man whose one-act plays were cause for comment in interested circles, Edward Albee, with his first attempt at writing a full length play, has become a major voice in the tough, competitive world of Broadway.

The play is set in the living room of a professor's house on the campus of a small New England college. There is little physical action, only a bare minimum of a plot, and a cast of only four people, one of whom is, for the most part, either off-stage or almost oblivious to what is going on around her. Thus, with little variety of personalities and less plot, the play must lean heavily on the playwright's ability to use language in effective and colorful ways. It is in the matter of dialogue that *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* has encountered its greatest difficulties, both with the critics and the public. A number of critics have said that Albee should never have left the one-act play writing field, charging that in attempting to create a full length work he has become afflicted with a kind of "verbal diarrhea." While it is true that at times the dialogue appears to become pointlessly involved, it is not truly pointless,

for it all leads, however circuitously, to the final exorcism. Other critics charge that Albee has substituted a long list of vulgarities for normal conversation, making the play, once the initial shock has worn off, a boring monotone catalogue of four-letter words. There is certainly a large quantity of words which are undeniably vulgar out of context. The whole situation of a series of verbal battles between two very drunk faculty couples is also unpleasant, but to stop there in judging the merits of the play is to commit a terrible injustice. The play may be profane, but boring and monotonous it is not. Its dialogue is witty, humorous, vulgar, and pathetic, and its duals range from free-swinging verbal fist-fights to ultimately more damaging, yet less obvious, back-stabbings.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is even more than a skillful exercise in dialogue. It is also a very real and frightening picture of an attitude in which most of today's men and women find themselves trapped. They are afraid of a nameless something which dogs their steps and their reactions to this fear are surprisingly similar to those of the four characters in *Virginia Woolf*. In them are mirrored the various disguises whereby men try to hide from themselves. There is the large, boisterous Martha, who seeks to drown her fears in her loud voice and loose manner as well as in her too-frequent drinks. George, her husband, is a failure whose major joy seems to be puncturing illusions with seldom obvious, but damning blows. Nick's refuge seems to be in being a young, eager go-getter, while his wife, Honey, draws a shield about her to keep any unpleasantness from penetrating to hurt her, and forcibly putting it out of her thoughts when it does penetrate the protecting barrier. However, these four are more than just mirrors of human attitudes. They are there to teach a lesson and are able to do so because they, as dramatic characters, can be so much more articulate than flesh-and-blood humans. The whole play can almost be summed up in one line of Martha's at the beginning of the last act: "... I cry all the time; but deep inside, so no one can see me. I cry all the time. And Georgie cries all the time, too. We both cry all the time, and then, what we do, we cry, and we take our tears, and we put 'em in the icebox, in the goddam ice trays until they're all frozen and then ... we put them ... in our ... drinks". Albee has not shown us a pretty picture, but he has shown us a good one and has done so in a manner which deserves great commendation. Whether one likes or dislikes *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, one can certainly not ignore it.

Ellen Marie Barrett

“The Crucible”—A Play of Social Reform

“The Crucible” by Arthur Miller brings to life a well-known scene in American history—that of the Salem witchcraft trials. Placed in the Puritanical setting of a Massachusetts town in 1692, the play, allowing for a few dramatic devices, is historically accurate and each of the characters shares the fate of his real-life counterpart.

The plot centers around Abigail Williams, the niece of the town minister, who has been caught dancing in the woods with some of her young followers. Searching for an excuse for her forbidden sin, she accuses local townspeople of bewitching the other girls and herself. Her cry of witchcraft is caught up by all as an easy way out and the panic soon gains enormous proportions.

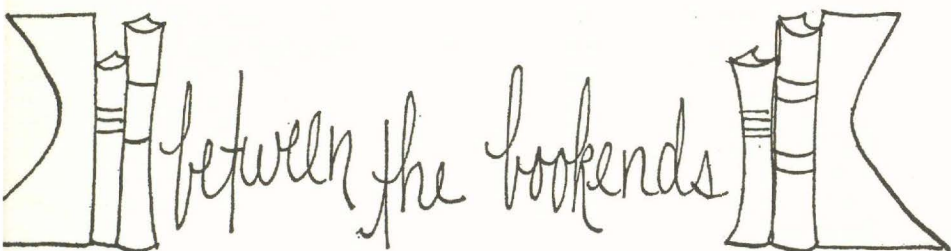
By accusing others of having bewitched him, an individual could confess his own sins and relieve his sense of guilt. Here was also a chance to vent pent-up emotions of hatred and revenge. Abigail, who has been having an affair with John Proctor while working as a maid in his house, sees an opportunity to use this mass hysteria to her own advantage and condemns John’s wife, Elizabeth, of witchery. The plot unravels as Proctor, gnawed with feelings of guilt, struggles to re-establish his self-respect.

One might well ask how a town of sensible people can be caught up in such a mass panic which culminates in the killing of many innocent people. This is probably one of the very questions which Arthur Miller wishes to raise in the minds of his audience, for this play was written at a time when the panic of McCarthyism was sweeping the country. It is obvious that Miller, who is always pre-occupied with the moral problems of modern American society, intends that this play be a comment on current events.

The Puritans are a sincere people who believe that they hold the light of the world. If this light is to be preserved against the spiritual opposition of dissenting philosophies and the physical opposition of the Indians, it is necessary that the colony remain a unified whole. As always, both then and now, the opposition, which in this case is individualism, is identified as being on the side of the devil or on the side of wrong. The government turns from judging the actions of man to holding trials on his nature.

The conflict between the individual and society is just as real today, although perhaps it is more subtle than it was in 1692. Thus “The Crucible” not only represents dramatic art in a high form, but it holds a thought-provoking message for the people of today.

Jeannie Tate



Pale Fire

Pale Fire, by Vladimir Nabokov, 224 pages

G. P. Putman's Sons, 1962

"Pale Fire, a poem in heroic couplets, of nine hundred ninety-nine lines, divided into four cantos, was composed by John Francis Shade (born July 5, 1898, died July 21, 1959) during the last twenty days of his life, at his residence in New Wye, Appalachia, U.S.A." So informs Shade's exacting editor 'Charles Kinbote,' whose insistent and malicious efforts in the Foreword, Commentary, and Index to the poem attempt to strip the honor of the inspiration from the dead 'author' John Shade; return personal slights to the poet's wife Sybil; assert his own importance as intimate friend of the poet and his subsequent right as editor of his friend's work.

But Kinbote (whose name means 'regicide') is actually using Shade's poem as a vehicle for relating his own story (the court intrigues of his native land, Zembla—a "distant northern land," and his exile from this land, and to put forward his own amusing comments on the poet Shade, Americana, politics, literature—everything which Nabokov wishes to say in disguise—at the same time exposing the vanity of the man and perhaps of all copious editors. Kinbote is a humorous device spatially flanking the poem *Pale Fire*; this construction allows Nabokov to assume both the identities of Kinbote and Shade and to mock and evade these two by turns, as well as the reader and himself.

In the autobiographical poem *Pale Fire*, Shade speaks of his struggles from the time of his boyhood

Asthmatic, lame and fat

I never bounced a ball or swung a bat

until the day of his death at sixty-one to unlock the secrets of death, to find evidence of existence after death.

Nabokov's treatment of the pathos of this theme is unique in its management of time. He says that "We die every day," that

the time we possess now is death itself because it is passing to death. At the same time he manages to save some of our precious moments for us, locking in a phrase the sounds of dogs barking, children calling and the clink of the game of horseshoes which form a summer evening. Continuation of life is achieved, then, by 'Shade' through his art.

Of life after death Shade is adamant in insisting that he'll "turn down eternity" unless

The melancholy and the tenderness

Of mortal life; . . .

Are found in Heaven by

the newlydead.

The melancholy and the tenderness of mortal life are certainly caught for us by Nabokov in his preservation of the moments we do know: even the awareness of the "trail of silver slime" left by a snail would be impossible to relinquish, as would be all of the lowly dear things which form the moments of our existence.

Lori Vink

Carayans

Caravans, James A. Michener

New York, Random House, Inc., 1963

If you are ever completely alone one evening, snowbound, without a hi-fi or records, no radio, no television, no newspapers, no book except *Caravans*—then by all means read it!

Mr. Michener must have written his latest novel using as a guide a travel brochure furnished by an American travel agency. Between descriptions of scenery and historical information he has interspersed a plea to the American people to temper their attitudes, especially in foreign relations, and to try to understand and accept existing societies in the world. Novels written from a traveler's experiences in a certain area are interesting, and this theme directed at the American people is a noble one as well as effective propaganda, but the technique is a frequently recurring one in contemporary American literature. A unique approach to the subject would certainly be refreshing.

Michener, however, does introduce one interesting feature into his generally stereotyped novel—an attempt at a mystery sub-plot,

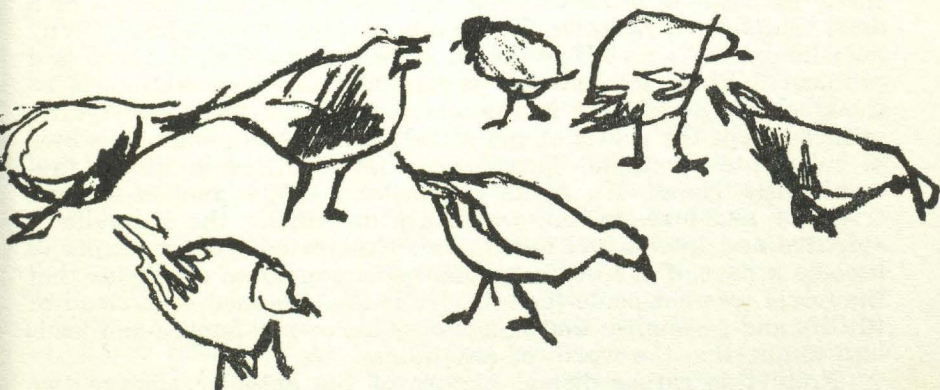
probably the only device which successfully holds the reader's attention through all 341 pages of the novel.

Even Michener's characters seem stereotyped, with a few possible exceptions. He says in effect: this is a typical nomad girl—see how well she represents her way of life; these are typical perceptive, and therefore progress-minded natives—see how well they work for the advancement of their country; here is a typical mal-adjusted American rebel—look at how easily she rejects all standards; and so on. The characters who are original are not fully developed by Michener.

Caravans could offer very interesting reading for someone who has not read a few novels on the best-seller list over the past few years. However, to one who has, it is repetitious and lacking in originality. In future years it may blend into some harmless classification, as the American regional story has done, and be grouped with contemporary novels which tell the same story with similar incidents and with the same characters, but which provide different settings, especially exotic foreign ones.

Michener's book is written in answer to America's problems in foreign relations specifically; and, generally, it is written to point out to the American people their need to re-evaluate their overbearing, pompous, or condescending attitudes toward people of other nations. This is commendable. However, if Mr. Michener can ask us, as members of the American community, to inspect our attitudes so closely, can we not ask him, as a novelist to invest his stories with a little more originality?

Connie Niles



Anne Everett

Colin Wilson: *An Outsider Looks at the Universe*

In recent years England has witnessed the birth of a new generation of writers. They are for the most part young, energetic, and eager to find fault with anything and everything in today's world. Among these new stars in the literary heavens may be included John Osborne, Kingsley Amis, and Colin Wilson. The particular author under discussion here, Colin Wilson, has in the last several years been dazzling London's literary world with one controversial book after another, beginning with *The Outsider*, in 1956, which caused an uproar on both sides of the Atlantic. By the usual criteria applied to a writer, Wilson, as his opponents hasten to assert, is not satisfactory. It is in the hope that other not so clear-cut criteria may be worthwhile in evaluating an author that this article is presented.

In light of Wilson's obvious disregard for grammar organization, and other rules of acceptable writing, one may say without fear of contradiction that the author's habits and manner of living likewise show little semblance of order. Of particular interest is his preference for a life of contemplation and complete distaste for work of any kind. Like his famous outsider, he has thrown off all bonds of convention—in particular, the apparent materialistic inclination of modern man. The product of this new formula is a highly singular individual whom one does not readily forget. Accoutred with a bicycle for transportation and a sleeping bag, he is accustomed to spending nights on Hampstead Heath while reading and writing by day in the British Museum in London. Of late he has forgone this life of physical hardship for the sumptuousness of a cold London flat, which he has equipped with a green inflatable rubber mattress to replace the sleeping bag.

Now thirty years old, Wilson has several books to his credit, including *The Outsider*, *Religion and the Rebel*, *The Stature of Man*, *Adrift in Soho*, and *Ritual in the Dark*. Autobiographical in character, Wilson's literary output centers around "the outsider," a lone figure which is at once peculiar to modern civilization and indicative of its decline. In considering the outsider, we must ask three questions in order to obtain an orderly, logical analysis of a most complicated situation. These are simply, "Who is he?", "Why does he exist?", and "How do we solve the problem, if there is a problem?" First, the outsider is basically the man who feels as though he is a stranger in the world, alienated from society. He cannot accept the values of the world; yet, he has none of his own to substitute for them. Therefore, what he faces in life is predominantly chaos. He fights a constant battle against human triviality and materialism, which are destroying the individual's spiritual and intellectual motivation. Frustrated with attempts to become a part of the ordinary bourgeois world, he concludes that the world was not made for him. He is thus plagued by a cloud of futility and pessimism that hangs over his own existence and leads him to question the worth of any human life.

From this rather dismal picture of the outsider emerge two schools of thought concerning his approach to life: the romantic and the realistic. To the romantic, the world is still a great place

to live in; people are basically good; he alone is "out of it." While he has the utmost respect for the common man, he considers himself forced to stand alone as a thinker.

The realistic school considers the outsider from the existentialist approach. In this category may be placed Sartre and Camus. Wilson cites Sartre's Roquentin in *La Nausée* and Camus' Meursault in *l'Etranger*. Contrary to the romantics, these men believe that the world is sick and they are the only ones aware of it. People go on living from day to day with a sense of satisfaction, but at the bottom of man is unfulfillment and futility. Men live in prisons and, what is worse, are unaware of it. When an individual becomes aware that, in reality, he is not free, he automatically enters the realm of the outsider. For the outsider freedom is a necessity in order to fulfill his most pressing need, that of self-expression. A world thriving on the herd instinct stifles his individual expression and makes him unable to realize what he feels to be a higher purpose in life. To the argument that man always has the natural goal in life of satisfying his physical needs, Wilson observes that herein lies the difference between the outsider and the insider. He who is concerned with nothing beyond his normal day-to-day ambitions is an insider; he drifts in the path of least resistance. At the other pole is the outsider, who instinctively rebels at this mode of life. It is not living at all for him. Combatting this barren existence is the job of the outsider—for to cure him of his outsiderishness is to cure civilization's ills as well.

The fact that the outsider is isolated from society is indicative that society has lost touch with the men of genius from whom it derives the discipline which holds it together. A society which incorporates its men of genius, such as that of the Middle Ages with the Church supplying the necessary discipline, is far healthier than one which excludes the outsider as an impractical day-dreamer from whom the least heard is the better. Although there is no shortage of men who have amassed vast quantities of knowledge by logic and reason, no amount of knowledge will raise man above the animalistic plane of existence, in Wilson's opinion. The outsiders supply the essential intuition and imagination—assets without which man, who is not free, may be given a higher goal in life. To Wilson, it is obvious that the men of genius today are "out of it."

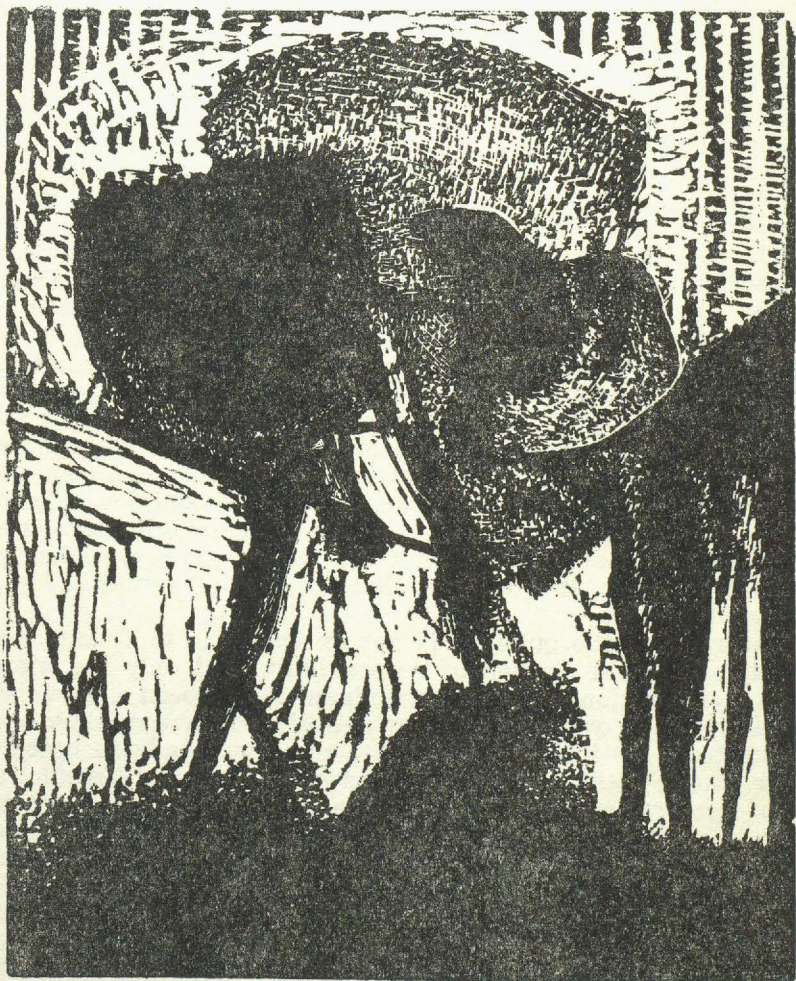
The road of the outsider is not an easy one to follow. He is forced to bear the burden of responsibility not only for himself but for civilization. He must withdraw from society, establish a self-discipline to overcome his own self-division and weakness, and emerge from his ivory tower with a message, ready to become a power among men. Armed with a message, he must abandon his life of contemplation, for thought is effective only to a certain degree. By commitment to action, he must recognize an undivided purpose. At this point the outsider has become a prophet, preaching a new religion, one of self-discipline and self-transformation.

It would be handy if, in a few short sentences, one could draw a profound conclusion concerning Colin Wilson as a thinker, the validity of his ideas, and his future in the literary world. Unfor-

tunately, this is not possible. His overnight success has put him in a precarious position, with the danger of being brushed off as quickly as he has been swept onto the literary scene. Whether he will go down in history as a great writer or as a great thinker is not foreseeable, and, further, it is of little concern here.

What matters is that he sees a world which is spiritually sick. To cure it he craves, not only for himself, but for all mankind, a deeper insight into the meaning of life. He does not have all the answers. The mere fact that he feels deeply and sensitively the need makes him a man among men and worthy of our consideration, not for how many split infinitives we find in a given book, but for the struggle toward self-betterment that is exemplified in him and in his writing. His struggle is civilization's struggle. His plea is in essence a plea for every man to take a look at himself and at the world around him in order that he may assess his goal in life and may begin the long journey toward the discovery of a greater intensity of living.

Janet Burnett



COMING PERFORMING ARTS IN THE WASHINGTON, D. C., AREA

American Light Opera Company

- *October 4—"Carousel"
- November 22—"Paint Your Wagon"
- January 31—"Fantasticks"
- March 20—"Little Mary Sunshine"

Arena Stage

- October 30—"The Devils" by John Whiting
- November 27—"Battle Dream" by Herbert Boland
- December 25—"Hotel Paradiso" by Feydeau
- February 26—"The Affair" by C. P. Snow, dramatized by Ronald Millar
- March 25—"Enrico IV" by Pirandello, adapted by John Reich

Catholic University

- November 29—"The Miser" by Moliere (2 weeks)
- January 24—"Good Morning Miss Dove", William McCleery, adaptor, Helen Hayes performing
- March 6—"St. Joan", G. B. Shaw

Constitution Hall

- November 19, 20—National Symphony, program of Beethoven, Schumann, Tchaikovsky
- November 23—Mantovani
- November 25-27—National Symphony, American Ballet Theatre
- November 30—The Weavers
- December 1—Arrau, pianist—Beethoven program
- December 2-7—"Obratsov", Russian Puppet Theatre
- December 8—Lev Oborin, Russian pianist
- December 28, 29—National Symphony and Washington Ballet Company—"The Nutcracker"
- December 7, 8 (afternoon)—"The Messiah", Handel

National Theatre

- November 11-24—"Seidman and Son"
- November 25—National Repertory Theater—"Seagull", "Ring Around the Moon", and "Crucible"
- December 16—"Dolly—A Damned Exasperating Woman", (variation, Wilder's "The Matchmaker", 4 week run, Carol Channing, Gower Champion)
- February 24—"A Man for All Seasons" by Robert Bolt
- March 16—"Little Me", with Sid Caesar

Ontario Theatre

- November 13-27—"Macbeth", Evans-Anderson, film
- "Macbeth", Evans-Anderson, film

Theatre Lobby

- (Currently)—"Candida" by G. B. Shaw

Washington Theatre Club

- November 11—"Miss Amurica" musical revue, 4 weeks

* Starting date

OXYMORON

Allegro
Moderato

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. It consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The first measure is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The notation features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing triplets. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, continuing the piece. It maintains the same key signature and time signature. The notation continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, showing a steady rhythmic flow.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The first measure is marked with a fortissimo 'ff' dynamic. The notation continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, maintaining the 3/4 time signature.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The notation continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, showing a consistent rhythmic pattern throughout the system.

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system. The first measure is marked with a fortissimo 'fff' dynamic. The notation includes a change in key signature to two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a change in time signature to 3/8. The piece concludes with a double bar line. The final measure is marked with a pianissimo 'ppp' dynamic.

Handwritten musical score on ten staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Key markings and features include:

- crescendo**: Written above the third staff.
- f**: Dynamic marking (forte) appearing on the fourth staff.
- ff**: Dynamic marking (fortissimo) appearing on the fifth staff.
- ff**: Dynamic marking (fortissimo) appearing on the sixth staff.
- Allegro**: Tempo marking appearing on the sixth staff.
- ff**: Dynamic marking (fortissimo) appearing on the seventh staff.
- ff sec.**: Dynamic marking (fortissimo) with a fermata, appearing on the ninth staff.

The score is written in a system of ten staves, with the first five staves forming the upper system and the last five staves forming the lower system. The notation is in a single system, with the staves connected by a brace on the left.

Gabrielle Judith Poole

THE WATER'S SECRET

Cast of Characters

Fantasma, a Sorcerer
Uncle Joseph, a poor farmer
Clorinda, an orphan, and Joseph's adopted niece
Peddler
Children of Mrs. Fussy
 Child 1
 Child 2
 Child 3
 Child 4
Mrs. Fussy
First Minister
Herald
Jester
King
Messengers and courtiers

Synopsis of Scenes

Act One

Scene 1: In front of curtain
Scene 2: Inside the farmhouse
Scene 3: Along the road
Scene 4: In front of Mrs. Fussy's house
Scene 5: The King's grove
Scene 6: The King's garden

ACT ONE

Scene One

The scene opens with the curtain closed. A puff of smoke is seen, and a Sorcerer appears "mysteriously". He is wearing a long robe and it swoops and swirls as he moves.

FANTASMA:

With magic dark and black as ink,

With smoke I spread my fame. (Throws smoke bomb on stage)

Beware my might and fear my wrath,

Fantasma is the name. (He attempts to swirl the cape around in full circle, thereby creating a sinister effect, only he gets tangled up in the folds, and falls on his face.)

FANTASMA: (sitting on stage) Oh, what's the use. I'm just a hopeless failure. Who ever heard of a sorcerer who can't do black magic? (shakes head) I never even learned tricks past smoke clouds, (he throws small smoke bomb over his shoulder, only this one fizzles) and I never really perfected even that simple technique. (stands up) I'm just not cut out for this business. (walks to proscenium) I suppose I should turn in my magic wand and union card, and forget the whole thing. (removes oversized card from inside pocket of robe, and reads) This is to certify that Fantasma is a member in good standing of the S. P. C. A., Society of Professional Conjurers and Alchemists. Signed A. Fakir. "We specialize in black magic. Also white magic and other spring colors." (He looks at the card, debating whether to tear it up, then looks at audience.) Maybe you there can help me decide. (sits on stage edge) But first I'd better tell you the whole problem. You see, all my life I've wanted to be a story-teller, and make children happy. On the other hand, my father is a magician, and he wanted me to be his assistant. But I was too much of a dreamer for that, and would always be imagining stories and not paying any attention to what was going on. Almost ruined his act, a couple of times. So finally he sent me to study with the Society, but I still couldn't concentrate no matter how hard I worked at it. And I have tried, I honestly have. Golly, I can't even laugh so it sounds mean and evil without getting a sore throat! (looks at card in his hand) I just wish I could convince him that there is as much magic in a good story as there is in any elaborate illusion. Maybe if I tell you all a story, you'll see what I mean. And if you think I'm right, I'll stay and tell stories whenever you want. But if you don't, I'll go back to the Society and never bother you again. I think that's fair, because there's nothing worse than having to listen to someone's stories you don't like, and personally, I think a lot of storytellers would do a much better job in some other line of work—like baby-sitting, for example. Let's see. (produces crystal ball from folds of robe) What shall I tell about? (makes a few hand passes over crystal) I see a story coming now. Coming from my own country, the land of "Once upon a Time." The tale of the water's secret. (light faces, curtain opens) Yes, it's all clear. (pause, lights dim on Sorcerer) Once upon a time there was a poor farmer and a young girl, and they lived in a small hut near the edge of the town of Wishfulfillment. (voice fades)

Scene Two

Inside the farmhouse. The farmer is cooking breakfast, in pantomime. Girl enters with bucket of water, and sets it down on the table loudly. Although she is shabbily dressed, she is very pretty.

JOSEPH: Now, be careful, Clorinda, and try not to spill the water. Every drop is precious because it hasn't rained for so long that the rivers are drying up, and the fields are turning to dust.

CLORINDA: I know, Uncle Joseph. I'm sorry, I just wasn't thinking. (She ladles out water into two cups and sets them on

the table.) Why is it that the king always has enough water to have the palace grounds so green and beautiful, and we have barely enough to drink?

JOSEPH: My dear, it's not the king's fault. He's an honest and just man. It's just that he doesn't know about the drought.

CLORINDA: Why not? Everyone else knows.

JOSEPH: Because the king is busy talking to other kings, and his First Minister hasn't told him of our problems. You know that the king rarely journeys outside the conference room, let alone outside the town walls, and so he never sees our predicament.

CLORINDA: But the Minister should tell him.

JOSEPH: He should, but he doesn't. So we must do the best we can, and hope that it rains soon.

CLORINDA: Maybe we should go and tell the king, instead of wishing.

JOSEPH: (ignoring her) Now, stop worrying, and come have some food. (She sits down, and there is a knock at the door.) Who can that be so early in the morning? (He opens the door.)

A Herald enters. He is pulling a two-wheel cart on which is an armchair. The First Minister is sitting on this chair, and he taps the ground with a long staff to stop the cart. Herald unrolls scroll and begins reading.

HERALD: Hear ye, hear ye. Be it known that the First Minister (turns and bows to First Minister) has arrived to collect the taxes due from this farm. Twenty-five baskets of grain.

JOSEPH: Twenty-five baskets! But I haven't even got five. Give me a little time . . .

FIRST MINISTER: Time, time, time. That's all I ever hear.

JOSEPH: But the drought . . .

FIRST MINISTER: (sharply) No, the tax is due today, it must be paid today. Either produce the twenty-five baskets, or I shall have to take something else as payment.

JOSEPH: I have nothing of any value to you.

FIRST MINISTER: We shall see. (pause) You will not pay?

JOSEPH: I cannot pay.

FIRST MINISTER: Pity. Hm, what shall I take instead? (His eye falls on Clorinda, and he laughs evilly.) I could use another chambermaid.

JOSEPH: No. (He tries to shield Clorinda.) Anything else, m' lord. Take my land—my home—anything—only spare the girl.

FIRST MINISTER: Yes, that's it. I'll take the girl.

CLORINDA: (runs to First Minister and falls to her knees) Oh, please, m' lord, I can't leave Uncle Joseph. He needs me to help him take care of the farm. Please change your mind.

FIRST MINISTER: Once a First Minister has spoken, it is a law. Laws cannot be changed so easily. But I will give you another chance. Is this man your father?

CLORINDA: He is like my father.

JOSEPH: M'lord, the girl is an orphan. I found her by the roadside when she was only a small baby, and have raised her as though she were my own child.

FIRST MINISTER: An orphan, hm. (pause) I have it. Girl, if you can get your mother to ask the king for your freedom, the request will be granted, and the debt canceled.

JOSEPH: But the girl is an orphan.

(The First Minister laughs evilly and says nothing.)

CLORINDA: But I have no mother.

FIRST MINISTER: Nonsense, everything has a mother (Clorinda begins to cry.) (impatiently) Oh, don't cry, don't cry. I can't stand a chambermaid who cries. (pause) Perhaps I was too harsh. I will revise the rules a little. (Joseph and Clorinda look up apprehensively.) The girl must merely produce either her mother or the picture of her mother in order to cancel the debt. (He laughs again, so both Clorinda and Joseph know he had no intention of being lenient.) And this must be done by sundown, today. (Clorinda and Joseph start to protest, but First Minister bangs on floor with staff.) That is all. Herald, we must be on our way. We have many more people to visit before our work is completed. (Herald wheels First Minister out door.)

CLORINDA: What are we going to do? I have no mother.

JOSEPH: There is nothing we can do. You heard him, "Once a First Minister has spoken, it is a law. Laws are not changed so easily." He is too powerful. (Clorinda reacts.) You can only look and see if you can find one, and since you only have until sundown, you had better start now. (He takes water bag from wall, fills it from the bucket, gets cup from sink, and hands both to her. Clorinda doesn't want to take them.) Here, take these with you. It's hot, and you'll be thirsty. Maybe you can find something that will satisfy that horrible Minister. When the rain comes, and the crop grows, I'll take twenty-five baskets of grain to the king, and try to ransom you back.

CLORINDA: But I've heard stories that the First Minister never lets his chambermaids play in the sun or even leave the palace rooms! I want to stay with you.

JOSEPH: I know, and I want you to say, but for now, you must go.

She leaves slowly. Joseph walks to the door, and watches her go down the path. He turns and goes to the table. Starts to pick up the plates. Then, overcome, he slumps into the chair, and buries his head in his arms, sobbing.

Scene Three

Along the road. This scene takes place in front of the curtain. Enter a peddler with a pushcart. The cart has a cabinet on top of it, and when the shop is "open", the doors are folded outward. Peddler stops center stage, and begins to open shop. Enter Clorinda.

CLORINDA: Wait, Mr. Peddler, wait. (Peddler hears her, and immediately begins to close up the shop. Clorinda approaches.) Where are you going? I called for you to wait.

PEDDLER: So you did, You said it's late, so I'm going to be early.

CLORINDA: No, I said "wait", not "late".

PEDDLER: Right you are, late. Don't want to be late. (pause) Where am I going?

CLORINDA: For heaven's sake, I don't know.

PEDDLER: Thought you did. Better stop and think about this, and here is as good a place to stop as any. (He begins to re-open the cart, turning his back on Clorinda.)

CLORINDA: Mr. Peddler.

PEDDLER: (turning around) Who are you, little girl? I don't know you.

CLORINDA: We just met. I'm the girl who asked you to wait.

PEDDLER: Late! My goodness, you're right. (starts to close up shop)

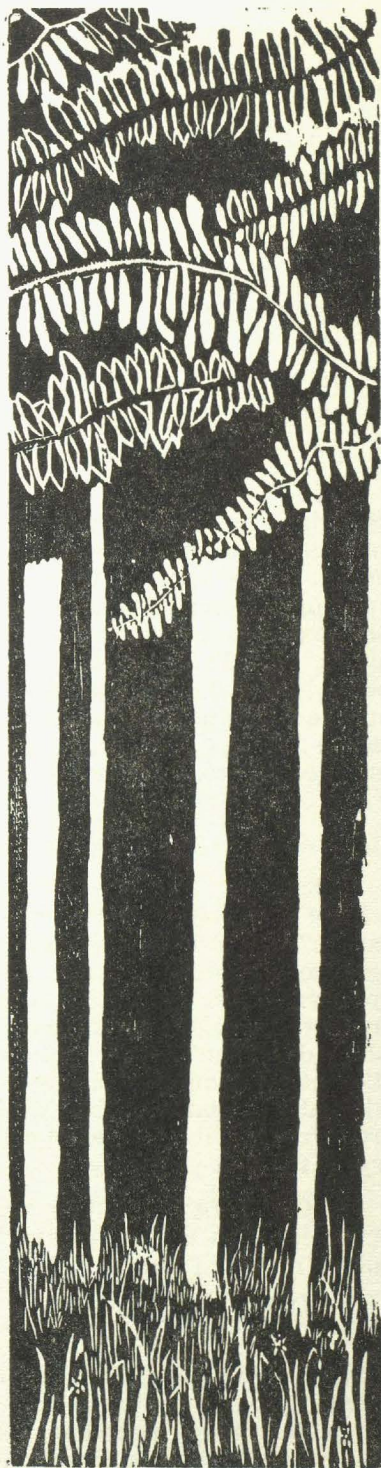
CLORINDA: No! Let's not go through this again. (He pays no attention, shouting.) I want to buy something.

PEDDLER: Buy, buy? Well, why didn't you say so?

CLORINDA: I did.

PEDDLER: What would you like? I sell everything.

CLORINDA: I want to buy a mother.



Abbie Donald

PEDDLER: Some rubber? Yes, we have some very nice rubber.

CLORINDA: No, a mother.

PEDDLER: Blubber? Little girl, I'm afraid you'll have to get that at the grocery store; it's out of season just now.

CLORINDA: No, no. Mother. (spelling) M-o-t-h-e-r.

PEDDLER: Oh, "mother". But my dear child, you already have one of them. What would you want with two?

CLORINDA: I don't want two, I just want one. You see, I'm an orphan, and I know I must have a mother, but I lost her. . . .

PEDDLER: An oversight, I'm certain.

CLORINDA: And I want to buy a new one.

PEDDLER: But my dear child, you can't buy mothers.

CLORINDA: Why not?

PEDDLER: (flustered) Because you just can't. . . . Besides, I haven't any in stock. (wipes his forehead with a large handkerchief). How about a nice flower pot instead?

CLORINDA: No, thank you. I must have a mother so I won't have to be a chambermaid for the king's first minister.

THE PEDDLER: The First Minister! My goodness, this is serious. I've heard that he beats his chambermaids if they don't please him, and sometimes he does it just if he's in a bad mood.

CLORINDA: (shudders) Oh.

PEDDLER: And he chains them in the dungeon, and doesn't let them eat for days. (Clorinda wails.) Yes, this is serious. Let me think. (wipes head with large handkerchief)

CLORINDA: You look awfully warm, would you like some water?

PEDDLER: Why, yes, thank you, if you have any extra.

CLORINDA: I have plenty. (pours him a cup of water)

PEDDLER: (The peddler drinks, and returns the cup. He begins to pace, his fingers pressed to his forehead. Clorinda is following close on his heels.) I've got it! (Peddler turns abruptly and bumps into Clorinda because she had not anticipated his turn.) There's a Mrs. Fussy who lives farther down the road in the big stone house. She has so many children, maybe she wouldn't mind taking on one more.

CLORINDA: Oh, that's a marvelous idea, Mr. Peddler. (She exits, calling "thank you" over her shoulder.)

PEDDLER: (calling) Goodbye, little girl, and good luck. (He folds up the cart and slowly wheels it off stage.)

Scene Four

Outside Mrs. Fussy's house. The large stone house is surrounded by a picket fence. Four children are playing in the yard. They are all dressed very warmly, in spite of the heat. As they see the girl approaching, they line up at the fence, the tallest to the shortest. The oldest is a boy, the youngest, a girl.

CHILD 1: May I help you, little girl?

CLORINDA: (laughing) My goodness, you're all dressed for winter, and it's so warm out.

CHILD 1: We're dressed this way so we won't catch cold.

CLORINDA: Catch cold! In this weather?

CHILD 1: I know, but grown-ups always think that the only way to avoid a cold is to stay all bundled up.

CLORINDA: How true. I think you can help me. I'm looking for a Mrs. Fussy. I was told that she lives in the big stone house.

CHILD 1: She does.

CHILD 4: She's our mother.

CLORINDA: A mother! How wonderful to have a mother.

CHILD 2: Don't you have one?

CLORINDA: No, I'm an orphan. But I want to talk to your mother and ask her to be my mother, too.

CHILD 3: She won't talk to you.

CHILD 2: She won't talk to anyone . . .

CHILD 1: Until she finishes her cleaning.

CLORINDA: When will that be?

CHILD 3: Never. The minute she finishes the parlor, the kitchen's dirty. The second the kitchen's clean, the bedroom's dusty. And then it's time for our baths.

CLORINDA: But I have to see her before sundown, today.

CHILD 1: Implausible.

CHILD 2: Improbable.

CHILD 3: Impossible.

CLORINDA: But I must see her.

CHILD 4: She'll be angry . . .

CLORINDA: I don't care. (Clorinda marches up the walk and knocks at the door. Door opens and a long handle of a mop is pushed out, being shaken to free the dust. Clorinda steps back, coughing. A head wrapped in a bright cloth is stuck out the door.)

MRS. FUSSY: Who is it? I'm very busy.

CLORINDA: I'm Clorinda, and I'd like to talk with you.

MRS. FUSSY: (opening door all the way) Oh, it's a little girl. What is it? (She notices Clorinda's bare feet.) My goodness, child, you're barefoot! You'll catch a death of cold.

CLORINDA: No I won't.

MRS. FUSSY: How do you know? Are you disinfected? Are you germ-proof? (Mrs. Fussy produces a large atomizer labeled "disinfectant" and sprays Clorinda.)

CLORINDA: (fighting off the spray) What I wanted to talk to you about . . .

MRS. FUSSY: And goodness, you're filthy. Get off my clean porch until your feet aren't so dusty and dirty. (Clorinda steps down onto the lawn.) Now, what is it?

CLORINDA: Mrs. Fussy, I'm an orphan, and I wondered if you would be my mother so I won't have to be a chambermaid

for the First Minister, and be locked away in . . .

MRS. FUSSY: Sorry, but I'm too busy. (starts to close the door)

CLARINDA: Wait. (Door re-opens.) (pleading) But I've heard that you have so many children, that I didn't think one more would make any difference.

MRS. FUSSY: I'm sorry, little girl, but I've too much to do. I have to clean this house, and that in itself is an endless job. And as long as I keep this door open, the dust keeps flying in, and then it takes me even longer to finish.

CLORINDA: But if you'd only agree to be my mother, you wouldn't even have to come to the king's palace with me. I could draw a picture of you, and take that instead. Then you could stay here, and not stop your cleaning.

MRS. FUSSY: My picture?

CLORINDA: Yes, I have to bring either my mother, or the picture of my mother to the palace by sundown, or I must become a chambermaid, and in that case, I don't know what will happen to me.

MRS. FUSSY: Poor little girl. But I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do before I've finished cleaning the house. (shuts door)

CHILD 2: Don't feel badly, she's always like that.

CLORINDA: How horrible.

CHILD 1: No, you just have to humor her.

CHILD 4: (He has been looking at the water bag Clorinda is carrying.) What's that?

CLORINDA: It's my water bag.

CHILD 4: Water!

CLORINDA: Would you like some? (She looks around at the other children.) Would you all like some? (They all nod and form a line with Child 4 leading). My goodness, you're all so thirsty. Don't you have any water here?

CHILD 1: Very little.

CHILD 2: And what we do have . . .

CHILD 3: Mother uses for cleaning.

CHILD 2: But we get all the milk we want.

CHILD 4: It makes us healthy.

CHILD 1: Thank you for the water.

CHILDREN 2, 3, and 4: Yes, thank you.

CLORINDA: You're welcome. (moves out gate and closes it after her) And now I must be on my way, I still have to find a mother by sundown.

CHILD 1: But it's so early. Stay and play awhile.

CHILD 4: Just one game!

CLORINDA: What are you playing?

CHILD 2: Anything you want.

CHILD 1: Tag.

CHILD 2: Hopscotch.

CHILD 3: Leapfrog.

CLORINDA: Leapfrog! (looks up at the sun, deciding) Well, maybe just for a little while.

Children cheer and re-open gate. Clorinda goes inside, hangs water bag on picket, and begins to play. First Minister enters in cart, pulled by Herald. Looks at children.

FIRST MINISTER: Stop the wagon?

Herald stops short, cart bumps into him. First Minister is thrown forward, landing on Herald's back.

HERALD: (not noticing incident) Yes, m' lord.

FIRST MINISTER: (still piggy-back) Do you see what I see?

HERALD: (looking straight ahead) No, m' lord.

FIRST MINISTER: Well, look, you nincompoop! (gets off Herald's back)

HERALD: (takes quick look at children playing) Yes, m' lord.

FIRST MINISTER: Do you see her? Do you see her? One more to add to my collection! She's in there playing and has forgotten all about the time? I'm so happy I could dance.

HERALD: Yes, m' lord. (He runs behind the First Minister so that when the First Minister jumps up the Herald can hold him while he clicks his heels together.)

FIRST MINISTER: Quickly, we must get to the palace and straighten up a cellar room for our young guest. Do you think she'd prefer the dungeon that's painted spider grey, or mouse brown? (laughs evilly)

HERALD: (He tries to laugh evilly, too, only it doesn't quite come off. First Minister looks at him sharply to make sure Herald isn't mimicking First Minister.) Either, m' lord. Your hospitality is known throughout the land, and I'm sure either would satisfy her.

FIRST MINISTER: Good. My feelings exactly. (looks at sun) Only a few hours to go. (looks at Clorinda) Too bad, my girl, you should learn to tend to your chores before you tend to your play. And you'll get no mercy—as I said before, "once a First Minister has spoken, it is a law. Laws are not changed so easily." (gets in cart) But we'll teach her chores, won't we, Herald? (bangs stick on floor)

HERALD: (starts cart on signal) Yes, m' lord.

FIRST MINISTER: We'll teach her . . . (laughs evilly as they exit)

Burst of laughter from children.

CLORINDA: But I really must go.

CHILD 3: Just one more game.

CLORINDA: I still have to find a mother, and look how low the sun is already.

CHILD 4: You don't want to go.

CLORINDA: No, I don't want to, but I have to. I'll come back as soon as I can, but I must leave now. (Girl waves goodbye. Lights dim on stage, rise on Fantasma)

FANTASMA: And so the little girl trudged on down the road. The afternoon wore on, and still Clorinda walked—looking, asking,

even begging for a mother, but all to no avail. A little before sundown, she had reached the King's Grove just outside the gates of the Royal Palace, and was resting a minute in its cool shade.

Scene Five

The King's Grove. Clorinda is sitting at the base of a large low rock, crying. The water bag is at her feet. Enter the King's Jester.

JESTER: Well, hello there. (He hops up on the rock.) Do I spy a viviparous biped with a red nose, or is it a little girl with a large problem? (sits on rock) What's wrong, honey?

CLORINDA: My name's Clorinda . . .

JESTER: And mine's Jes. (He stands up on the rock and bows to her, taking her hand. She is amused and laughs.) That's short for Jester, which is what I am, at your service. (He jumps off the rock and makes another sweeping bow, then he sits back on the rock.) Now, what's the trouble?

CLORINDA: I'm looking for a mother . . .

JESTER: (rising) Oho, not me, babe! Afraid that's a little out of my line. I'm strictly a song and dance man. Some people think I'm nothing but a fool, and you know, they're right. (poking her) Get it? Fool, Jester? (He doubles up with laughter at his own joke, and almost tumbles backwards off the rock.) But back to you. What's with this mother bit?

CLORINDA: My Uncle Joseph couldn't pay the taxes on our farm, and so the First Minister said I had to become his chambermaid as payment unless I could produce either my mother, or the picture of my mother by sundown today.

JESTER: Well, that doesn't sound too hard.

CLORINDA: I'm an orphan, and I haven't a mother to produce. (She begins to cry.)

JESTER: Oh, then that is a rough one. Well, let's see. (looks at her) First thing we've got to do is cheer you up. Never have been able to think clearly when people are crying. (He produces a flower out of the air and gives it to her. Clorinda is immensely pleased, and she smiles. He holds his hand out and she shakes it.) Why are you afraid of me?

CLORINDA: I'm not.

JESTER: Then why are you shaking? (He laughs and does a back flip.) (Clorinda laughs, too) There, that's better. Now then . . . (notices water bag) What's in there?

CLORINDA: Water. Want some?

JESTER: No thanks. (pacing) That First Minister is certainly giving you a rotten deal, so we're going to have to try to beat him at his own game. Right? Right. Hm, getting your real mother here in time is out, so what we'll need is a picture of her. (snaps fingers to himself) I've got it! (to Clorinda) You haven't seen my dog around anywhere, have you?

CLORINDA: What does it look like?

JESTER: She's a cocktail.

CLORINDA: A what?

JESTER: A cocktail. Get it? A mixed dog! You can't miss her,

cocker head, and airdale body. (confidentially) Takes after both parents.

CLORINDA: Well, of course, silly. Puppies always look like their parents.

JESTER: (softly and slowly) And so do children. (pause) I know what we need.

CLORINDA: What?

JESTER: Some of that water so you can wash away those tear streaks from your face. (Clorinda looks puzzled, but complies. Pours cup of water.) Now wait. (sits on rock) Tell me what you see in the cup. (He says this in such a way that Clorinda knows he has a particular answer in mind.)

CLORINDA: Water. I don't understand.

JESTER: Hold it steady, and look again.

CLORINDA: I see myself.

JESTER: Look beyond that.

CLORINDA: (stares intently, then her face breaks into a smile, jubilantly) I see my mother! (pause, her face clouds)

JESTER: What's the matter, honey?

CLORINDA: Will the king think it's my mother?

JESTER: (pause) Only one way to answer that question. Come on. (He takes her by the hand, and the two exit.)

Scene Six

The King's Garden. The King is sitting on the Outdoor Throne. This throne is raised on a platform, with two or three steps leading up to it. The First Minister is talking to him.

FIRST MINISTER: And so this farmer positively refused to pay the tax, and I ordered the girl to come to the palace and serve in the royal household.

KING: But why did he refuse to pay?

FIRST MINISTER: He made so many excuses, your majesty, I couldn't keep track.

KING: Strange, yet if you say so . . .

Enter Jester and Clorinda

FIRST MINISTER: Aha, there you are! The sun is almost down, where have you been?

JESTER: A miss is as good as a mile, and like you said, only "almost".

FIRST MINISTER: (scowls at Jester, then turns to Clorinda) Well, don't stand there gawking. Come here.

Clorinda moves forward. She is clutching the cup of water.

FIRST MINISTER: What's that? (First Minister tries to grab the cup out of Clorinda's hand, but she runs to the king and kneels. Jester places himself between Clorinda and the First Minister.)

CLORINDA: Your majesty, here is the picture of my mother I was told to furnish. Now, please let me go back to Uncle Joseph.

KING: Picture?

FIRST MINISTER: The girl is lying. She has nothing but a tin cup.

KING: Cup?

JESTER: Sire, you must look inside.

The next three speeches are spoken together.

CLORINDA: At the water.

JESTER: The terms called for . . .

FIRST MINISTER: They're both lying.

KING: Stop! Water? Terms? Cup? Will someone kindly tell me what's going on?

CLORINDA: (Clorinda looks at Jester. He nods, and she begins.) Your majesty, my name is Clorinda, and I live with my Uncle Joseph on a farm outside the town walls. Today your First Minister came to collect the taxes we owe, and we couldn't pay because of the drought.

The First Minister begins to sneak off the stage.

KING: Drought? (looks to First Minister for confirmation, and sees him leaving) Stop that man!

Two guards near the door move to block his path. First Minister turns, and runs in opposite direction. He is tripped by the Jester, who captures him and brings him back to the king.

KING: Now, then. Let's get to the bottom of this. (to Clorinda) Tell me about the drought.

CLORINDA: It has been horrible. There is no rain, and the fields are turning to dust because we don't have enough water for both the crops and ourselves.

KING: (claps hands) Messenger, run to the Royal Reservoir, and have the surplus water from the Royal Water Supply issued to the farmers outside the town walls immediately, if not sooner. If the land cannot sustain the people, then their king must fill in, at least temporarily. (The First Messenger leaves) (the King calling) And have someone fetch the girl's uncle. (the Second Messenger leaves).

CLORINDA: (to Jester) Oh, Uncle Joseph was right. He is a kind and just king.

KING: Now then, my dear, what's this about a picture?

CLORINDA: Your majesty, when my uncle couldn't pay the tax, the First Minister said I had to produce either my mother, or her picture by sundown, or I had to become his chambermaid. He said it was a law . . .

FIRST MINISTER: (meekly) Your majesty, you agreed once a First Minister speaks, it is a law . . .

KING: (ignoring him) And your mother?

JESTER: The girl's an orphan, Sire.

KING: (to First Minister) You knew this? (First Minister looks down and says nothing.) Answer me!

FIRST MINISTER: Yes, your majesty. (falls to knees) Mercy, Sire . . .

KING: (to Clorinda) Please continue.

CLORINDA: So I went and asked a peddler if I could buy a mother, and he sent me to see a Mrs. Fussy, but she was too busy to either be my mother or to even let me draw a picture of her.

KING: Why is she so busy?

CLORINDA: She has a big house to clean, and many children to care for. And she's so extremely neat!

KING: Maybe I can do something to help her. (to Messenger

#3) Send for Mrs. Fussy. (Messenger #3 leaves.)

CLORINDA: (to Jester) But she's very busy, she'll be angry and won't come.

JESTER: She'll come if the king ask her to.

KING: So you couldn't find a mother or a picture.

CLORINDA: Oh, but I do have a picture of her, and right here thanks to the Jester.

FIRST MINISTER: I don't believe it. That picture doesn't exist.

KING: (to First Minister) Quiet! (to Clorinda) Let me see it.

CLORINDA: I have to hold the cup very still, but if you peek . . . now . . . you can see it. (she is looking into the water.)

KING: (steps down and peers over her shoulder. pause) I can't see a thing. Move your head, and let me look, too.

CLORINDA: If I move my head, you won't see it.

JESTER: (snaps fingers) I've got it! The fish pond.

CLORINDA: It might work.

JESTER: Come on! (he takes Clorinda's hand, Clorinda takes the King's hand, the King takes the First Minister's, and all are pulled by the Jester to the Fishpond. This pond is a medium size inflatable plastic swimming pool.)

Clorinda peers over the edge of the pool. King doesn't react. Jester holds Clorinda around the waist and she leans far over the edge.

KING: (pause) Yes, that is a picture of your mother.

Jester pulls Clorinda in.

FIRST MINISTER: No, it can't be. Let me see, let me see. (pushes his way to the pool's edge, leans over looking. Jester gives him a slight shove, and he falls across the pool into the water with a splash.)

KING: Who did that? (looks around, Jester is innocently looking at the sky.)

FIRST MINISTER: (from pool) I was pushed!

KING: Jester . . .

JESTER: Not pushed, your majesty, shoved—by an overgrown imp-pulse. (goes to the pool and pulls First Minister out) No hard feelings, m' lord, I couldn't have stopped him if I'd tried.

Enter Uncle Joseph with the Second Messenger.

JOSEPH: Your majesty, I can't possibly pay the tax now. You've already taken my niece, isn't that enough?

CLORINDA: (running to Joseph) Uncle Joseph! I don't have to stay any longer. We can go home, and I can be with you always.

KING: Now, just a minute. I said you didn't have to stay to be a chambermaid, and you don't. But I'd like to invite both you and your uncle to stay on at the palace as my personal guests.

CLORINDA: Oh!

JOSEPH: Thank you, your majesty. We would be more than happy to accept.

KING: Fine. (claps hands) Messenger, tell the Royal Chef to prepare a banquet for our friends, and let us have a celebration and entertainment.

COURTIERS, JOSEPH, CLORINDA: A celebration! How wonderful, etc.

Exit Messenger #2 and Enter Messenger #3 and Mrs. Fussy. She is carrying her feather duster.

MRS. FUSSY: I do hope the king won't be long. I have so much to do, so much to clean. (She has been talking to the Messenger #3, and not looking where she was going. She bumps into the king and kneels.) Oh, your majesty, I beg your pardon.

KING: Please stand up. You must be Mrs. Fussy.

MRS. FUSSY: Yes, your majesty.

KING: I have heard that you are very clean and extremely industrious.

MRS. FUSSY: I try, Sire, but there's always another speck of dust that gets away from me. But mark my words, I'll hunt down every last one of them, no matter how long it takes.

KING: I'm sure you will, and I think it would be a good idea for you to have some help.

JESTER: (interrupting) Majesty, a word? (whispers into King's ear. King smiles, and Jester laughs.)

KING: Excellent! Mrs. Fussy, you *shall* have help. I had intended to banish the First Minister from the court and the city limits for misrepresentation, for cruelty, and for not telling me the problems of my people, but a better plan has been suggested. He is to become your personal valet, and help you clean your house until he learns to behave himself.

FIRST MINISTER: But your majesty . . .

KING: Silence. (with a wink to Clorinda) Once a king has spoken, it is a law. Laws cannot be changed so easily. (to Mrs. Fussy) And so, good luck to you.

MRS. FUSSY: (sprays First Minister, then dusts him off with the feather duster) Thank you, Sire. (She leads First Minister off stage.)

KING: (claps hands) And now on with the celebration. (claps again) Let the celebration begin.

King climbs on throne, music starts. Jester begins turning cartwheels, or juggling. Servants bring on platters of food, begin to set tables up. Lights dim to black out, and curtain closes.

FANTASMA: And that, my friends, is the story of Clorinda. (pause) But I see that our time is up, and I don't want to keep you. I hope you enjoyed the story, and if you did, maybe you'll come again and let me tell you another one. So, until later, goodbye for now. (Fantasma drops another smoke bomb and "vanishes".)

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